

Sinclair  
Broadcasting's  
decision to force  
their stations to  
air an anti-Kerry  
"documentary" days  
before the election  
is a clear example  
of the dangers of  
media consolidation.  
Unless comparable  
airtime is also  
provided for a  
competing view (such  
as the one presented  
in "Going Upriver"),  
Sinclair is abusing  
its privilege as a  
public broadcasting  
licensee.

Sinclair uses the  
public airwaves free  
of charge, and is  
obligated by law to  
serve the public  
interest. But when  
large companies  
control the  
airwaves, we get  
more of what's good  
for the largest  
stockholder's bottom  
line -- and less of  
what a functional  
democracy needs,  
which is a genuinely  
free exchange of  
ideas. When one  
influential  
supporter of an  
incumbent President  
can strong-arm 62  
local stations into  
pre-empting regular  
programming to air  
what amounts to a  
"stolen hour" of  
negative campaign  
propaganda,  
something is  
dangerously wrong  
with the way things  
are working. It's  
more important that  
we see real people  
from our own  
communities and more  
substantive news  
about issues that  
matter.

Sinclair's actions  
show why we need to  
strengthen media

ownership rules, not  
weaken them. They  
show why the license  
renewal process  
needs to involve  
more than a returned  
postcard. Thank you.